



Recovery Community Services Program

Project Profiles

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2004 Grantees

RCSP Project: Accessing Success
Peer to Peer Recovery Support Program

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Eugene, Oregon

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The mission of Relief Nursery is to prevent child abuse and neglect by providing early family interventions focused on building resilient children, strengthening parents, and preserving families. Accessing Success addresses the recovery issues of parents in the criminal justice system with children under 6 who may be at risk of abuse or neglect. The peer services are available at Relief Nursery's Eugene headquarters and in Salem and Cottage Grove, Oregon.

Peer Support Interventionists

Accessing Success's peer support interventionists (PSIs) provide peer counseling in home visits or phone calls and conduct crisis intervention when necessary. They also lead recovery support groups and classes in anger management, parent education, and social skills.

The PSIs accompany peers to court and child welfare agencies, providing support and advocating on their behalf. They provide support to other family members as well.

Orientation, Training, and Supervision

Accessing Success has developed a strong supervisory plan and an orientation and training program for peers interested in becoming PSIs. Working with a supervisor, each PSI creates a professional development plan that identifies goals and skills to be acquired. An experienced PSI "shadows" a new PSI during home visits, court hearings, family meetings, 12-step meetings, and other activities. Mentoring is available from Relief Nursery staff.

RCSP Project: Circles of Recovery III

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White Bison is an American Indian nonprofit organization with the goal of bringing 100 Indian communities into healing by 2010. Based in Colorado Springs, Colorado, it operates throughout Indian Country, spreading its philosophy of “wellbriety,” which means being both sober and well. Its RCSP project, Circles of Recovery III, aims to develop an infrastructure of recovery support services in 15 local communities to help prevent relapse, promote holistic health, and reframe community norms about recovery.

Recovery Services Coaches/Firestarters

Through leadership development and training, Circles of Recovery III develops Firestarters, also known as recovery services coaches men and women in recovery with the facilitative and leadership skills to coordinate and deliver a range of culturally appropriate social supports for recovery in their home communities.

Wellness Coalitions

Circles of Recovery III is helping local Native American communities reframe traditional clan knowledge into strategies for building productive coalitions for recovery and holistic health in individuals, families, and communities.

Seven Trainings

White Bison’s Seven Trainings are having an impact and being used to develop additional programs. The seven trainings are based on the Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps, each specially targeted to men, women, adult children of alcoholics, Native American children of alcoholics, families, daughters, or sons. Firestarters are trained to facilitate these curricula.

Website

The White Bison website, which is used to communicate instantly with Firestarters across the country, is getting one million hits a month, and hits seem to be increasing by 100,000 per week. Sharing “how we did it”

information in discussion groups hosted on the website have increased the quality of peer learning and supervision among the Firestarters.

Warrior Down

Based on the cultural tradition of never leaving a warrior on the battlefield, Circles of Recovery III is using the Firestarters to help people coming out of treatment or prison. In Idaho, a Firestarter is considered as an Elder and paired with individuals newly released from prison or treatment to help them with issues and provide support. Assistance can take the form, for example, of helping the person obtain a driver's license or find a job. In 6 months since the program started, not one of the 36 people in the program has relapsed or been returned to an institution. This peer-to-peer program will be repeated at the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota.

RCSP Project
& Grantee:

Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery
(CCAR)
Wethersfield, Connecticut

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CCAR is a recovery community membership organization that promotes recovery through advocacy, education, and service. Its RCSP project uses a peer-based social support model to build recovery capital throughout Connecticut. CCAR's definition of recovery capital is "individual, relational, and community resources that support sustained recovery."

Recovery Community Centers

Building on the success of its center in Windham, Connecticut, CCAR opened its second recovery community center in late 2005 in New London, Connecticut. Both recovery centers host an array of peer recovery support services, including trainings, workshops, vocational services, informal recovery coaching, and clean and sober social events.

The recovery community centers "anchor" recovery in a visible way in the heart of the communities they serve. CCAR plans to have a total of nine recovery centers by the end of the grant.

All-Recovery Groups

All-Recovery groups meet regularly meeting at both centers. These are recovery support groups that welcome members from any "form" of recovery12-step, Christian, other faith-based, methadone maintenance, medication assisted, dual diagnosis, individual, and any other type. All-Recovery meetings discuss topics related to recovery and close with affirmations.

Telephone Recovery Support

CCAR has developed a telephone recovery support program for people completing treatment for a substance use disorder. Trained peers call people leaving treatment programs once a week for 12 weeks to check on their status and progress and to offer support where needed. CCAR has developed a case rate for this phone service and expects to provide it as an Access to Recovery (ATR)-funded service in Connecticut.

Volunteer Management System

CCAR has developed a Volunteer Management System which includes job descriptions for 19 different volunteer positions. In 2005, volunteers recorded more than 3,000 hours of service time.

Recovery Housing Project

The Recovery Housing Project is a three-pronged effort consisting of a recovery housing data base, a Recovery Housing Coalition, and technical assistance on how to open a recovery home. The searchable data base of recovery housing in Connecticut contains information on 107 houses with a combined capacity of more than 1,100 beds. The project gets 50-60 calls a week for information from the data base; the Department of Corrections uses it to get people out of correctional halfway housing and into recovery housing that meets the standards set by the Recovery Housing Coalition.

CCAR's technical assistance, provided four times a year in training sessions, covers standards established by the Coalition, zoning laws, funding, and other key issues. About 70 people have attended each training, and seven new houses have been opened by attendees, adding 70 new beds.

Family Support and Education Groups

Recognizing the importance of engaging the family in the recovery process, CCAR has instituted family support groups and a family/community education series.

Recovery Walks!

CCAR's annual walk in support of recovery has become a community tradition. In 2005, an honor guard of 68 men and women with at least 10 years of recovery led the march, inspiring the 2,000 other marchers and the many others who came out to cheer for Recovery Walks!

RCSP Project: Face to Face—Capacity Development Through Interpersonal Connectiveness

Grantee: Welcome Home Ministries
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A faith-based organization, Welcome Home helps women move from the correctional systems of San Diego County into productive lives in the community. Through Face to Face, women who have made that transition successfully offer peer support to others coming out, helping them break the cycle of addiction and incarceration, choose options for recovery, and find hope for the future. Welcome Home has two offices strategically located close to detention facilities.

Peer Mentors

Peer mentors in Face to Face provide supportive services to women in jail and, following release, in treatment facilities or other types of rehabilitation programs. The companionship of “women who have been there before” is the common thread in all contacts with the women served, whether in outreach visits in jail, letters to incarcerated women, or one-on-one contacts during and after treatment.

Instrumental Supports

In addition to providing emotional and/or spiritual support, peer leaders accompany the former inmates to court or to dental, eye, or medical appointments. Instrumental support is provided in the form of emergency food supplies or clothing, bus passes, hygiene items, and transportation.

Recovery Support Group

Face to Face conducts a weekly recovery support group for women. Women in the group explore relationships with family, friends, significant others, children, and other women in the program.

Employment and Housing Support

Peers receiving services from the Face to Face Program are helped to find employment and/or enrolled in adult education activities. Face to Face peer mentors also help women find safe housing in the community.

Dental and Vision Ministry

Welcome Home has organized a network of dentists supporting recovery who provide free or deeply discounted dental work for women enrolled in Face to Face. The local Lions Club also offers vision exams and eyeglasses at a fraction of the normal cost.

Pilot Program with Corrections Department

Previously, Welcome Home Ministries has only been able to work with women in local jails. In the fall of 2005, negotiations were completed with the California Department of Corrections for Face to Face to begin working with women in State institutions at the California Institution for Women (CIW) and Puerta La Cruz Conservation Camp. In addition, Face to Face is developing relationships with the CIW Chaplains' Department and the Parole Planning Unit.

Leadership Development

Face to Face is developing formal peer-to-peer training and protocols to educate peer leaders in best practices for one-on-one peer counseling, effective goal setting, and other important peer support skills. Welcome Home also is writing several articles on peer services for publication in professional journals.

RCSP Project: Heartland CARES

Grantee: Heartland CARES, Inc.
Paducah, Kentucky

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The purposes of this peer project are to promote effective recovery from substance use disorders and prevent relapse among HIV-positive persons throughout 27 counties of western Kentucky and 17 counties of southern Illinois. The facilitating organization provides primary care and outreach, prevention, and social support services for persons living with HIV infection.

Buddy System Peer Mentoring

Peers needing services are paired with peer mentors in a “buddy system.” Because service recipients are dispersed sparsely throughout a 250-square-mile rural area and many do not have cars, much of the mentoring takes place in telephone conversations. The project gives peers prepaid cell phones programmed for up to 300 minutes a month, enabling them to be in frequent contact with the peer leader who is mentoring them.

Life Skills Support Groups

Peer leaders are paired with staff to lead support groups aimed at helping peers develop life skills in areas such as relationships, anger management, and healthy living. Peers lead the sessions, but a staff member also is available to handle the complex emotional and medical issues that may come up in people dealing with both HIV infection and substance use disorder.

Peer Outreach

Peer leaders perform critical, life-saving tasks by engaging and supporting new peer service recipients in various locations in the Kentucky-Illinois service area. Peer leaders are supported with travel vouchers, training, and the availability of project staff.

Education-Socialization Events

Because of what project leaders term “extreme isolation” and a “desperate need” for socialization activities among recovering people in rural western Kentucky and southern Illinois, an important peer service offered by Heartland CARES combines education and socialization opportunities. Classes are led by peers on topics related to wellness, and are followed by outdoor social activities such as picnics in the summer and indoor activities such as games during the winter. Peer supportive educational and social activities have recently been increased and extended to three new locations: Marion, Illinois and Hopkinsville and Paducah, Kentucky.

**RCSP Project
& Grantee:**

Northern Ohio Recovery Association (NORA)
Cleveland, Ohio

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NORA is engaging the recovery community in developing and providing culturally competent peer recovery support services in three counties in northern Ohio. The peer support services are designed to prevent relapse, reengage recovering persons in the community, and promote high-level wellness.

Resource Centers

NORA provides peer services and recovery support groups at four sites. Two county resource centers one in Cleveland (Cuyahoga County) and the other one in Elyria (Lorain County) were opened in the first year of the grant, and a third is planned for Summit County. These centers provide space for support groups and serve as a hub for other peer support activities, including peer mentoring and connecting people in early recovery to resources.

NORA also operates from its office in East Cleveland, maintains an office at the Salvation Army in Elyria, and provides mentor-led support groups at a nearby recovery house for men that opened in Elyria early this year. Recovery support group meetings are held at all sites.

Peer Mentors and Support/Education Groups

Peer mentors provide one-on-one support for people in early recovery (including adolescents in treatment) and lead recovery support and education groups, including a number of nontraditional groups. Some of the groups offered are Pattern Changing for Abused Women, focusing on the recovery needs of abused women; Transitions, a re-entry group; an anger management group for men; and life skills and job readiness groups.

Linkages with Stakeholders

NORA has developed productive linkages with many organizations, including Iron Bar Ministries, Phase I Recovery House, Salvation Army, and the Lorain County Urban Minority Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Outreach Project. These stakeholders refer people in need of social support to NORA and help NORA identify potential mentors. In addition, some provide space for NORA mentors to work.

Special Events

In the last year, NORA has held a number of trainings, including two peer mentor trainings. In addition, it convened a weekend conference on “Building Bridges” for the recovery, faith, and treatment communities which drew 250 participants and an open house attended by the new mayor of Cleveland.

RCSP Project: Peer to Peer

Grantee: The Fortune Society
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Staffed primarily by former prisoners, The Fortune Society is a not-for-profit community-based organization offering a broad range of services to help ex-prisoners and at-risk youth break the cycle of crime and incarceration. Peer to Peer develops peer leaders who model successful recovery and provide support for peers at early stages of the recovery process who are reentering the community from a correctional facility.

Peer Support

Peer leaders provide ongoing support consisting of companionship, listening to emotional problems, giving advice on social networking and lifestyle changes, and providing information in one-on-one and group formats.

Instrumental Support

Help in completing applications for employment and/or housing is available from the peer leaders. Other peer services include escorting clients when they leave the building for therapy or doctors' appointments, helping them apply for Medicaid or public assistance, providing assistance with reading documents received in the mail, navigating public transportation, and alleviating stress.

Curriculum Development

A peer leader training curriculum has been completed. It consists of eight modules: orientation and overview; social skills and conflict resolution; conflict resolution skills and active listening; training; cognitive distortions; decision making and problem solving I and II; and losses in addiction.

Leadership Development

Two groups of peers have completed the 12-week training for peer leaders and The Fortune Society's human resources orientation. In addition, they received group facilitation training from Fortune's clinical supervisor, and were briefed on processes for establishing and maintaining boundaries when working with peers.

RCSP Project: PROSPER—Peers Reach Out Supporting Peers to Embrace Recovery

Grantee: Walden House, Inc
Los Angeles, California

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Walden House is a nonprofit substance use disorder treatment agency providing services throughout California. Under the Walden umbrella, PROSPER is building a strength-based peer-to-peer recovery community in Los Angeles among men and women reentering the community from prison, as well as their families.

Drop-in Center

Located in downtown Los Angeles, the PROSPER drop-in center provides peer-to-peer reentry and social support opportunities for ex-offenders and their families. Ex-offenders are encouraged to come directly to the drop-in center following release from prison. Peer leaders work with each incoming peer to develop an individualized recovery and reentry plan. The center is open until 9:00 p.m. so that peers can drop by after work.

Resource Connection

The center also houses a Resource Center designed to offer its members access to vocational and housing placements and other ancillary services vital to persons in recovery who are reentering the community.

Instrumental Supports for Employment

PROSPER offers its members access to fax machines, e-mail, and a telephone to receive calls from prospective employers, assistance with resume development, and clothing vouchers. In addition, it connects its members with agencies throughout Los Angeles that offer jobs to ex-offenders.

Workshops, Support Groups and Wellness Activities

The PROSPER center offers a number of resources including educational seminars on relapse prevention, money management, career planning, and creative art classes. Many, although not all, of the classes are peer-led. The center also hosts an active peer-led support group called “Be Real With Self” which promotes socialization and provides mutual support and a women’s support group. PROSPER sponsors a softball team and has a weekly yoga class.

Family Socialization Events.

Every Friday night is “Kick-It-Night” at the PROSPER drop-in center. Families come together to watch videos, eat popcorn, and play board games. These weekly gatherings are highly valued by PROSPER peers and provide a good opportunity for building social skills, strengthening families, and creating a sense of shared community.

Peer Leader Steering Committee

A Peer Leader Steering Committee guides the development and implementation of all services.

2003 Grantees

RCSP Project: Asian Pacific American Community of Recovery Network (ACORN)

Grantee: Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Seattle, Washington

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The Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization offering human services and behavioral health programs to Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) in King County, Washington. ACORN was funded to develop culturally competent and linguistically accessible peer recovery support services for members of its target population who encounter system, language, and cultural barriers in their paths to recovery.

Asian Pacific American-Focused Recovery Resource Center

ACORN's resource center gives members of the APA recovery community a place to meet in an atmosphere of mutual support with others who have similar addiction, recovery, and cultural backgrounds. An array of recovery support services has been developed, including: daily sober support groups in Asian languages, monthly family-children support groups, a group for Mien seniors with opiate-use disorders, vocational ESL classes, acupuncture services, art class, computer class, game nights, and many cultural celebration events facilitated by peer helpers. ACORN also has developed a resource center with a library containing culturally relevant recovery information; Asian books, tapes and videos; and a computer lab.

Culturally Relevant Support Groups

Members of ACORN's target groups come from cultures that value communication that takes place through sensing and insight gained through silence rather than verbal interaction. Therefore, new approaches to recovery support groups have been necessary. ACORN has created culturally appropriate recovery support programs that are adapted from 12-Step approaches and/or incorporate meditation and Buddhist chanting

practices. Recovery support meetings in 10 language-based groups meet 6 days a week, led by peer helpers.

Bilingual Peer Helpers

Asian-language speaking bilingual peer helpers provide a variety of peer services including: information and assistance, referrals and linkages to services, volunteering with recovery support groups, maintaining the ACORN Center, and recovery coaching. Peer helpers and volunteers also assist peer service recipients with such tasks as calling probation officers, providing interpretation for interviews in the welfare office, accompanying peers to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) appointments, getting food stamps, talking about struggles with life and addiction, or just laughing together. ACORN's peer helpers have emerged as powerful and inspirational role models, as brotherly mentors, and as coaches for others in recovery.

Community Education and Outreach

Community education and outreach activities, often held in conjunction with cultural events, festivals, and conferences, have been important in introducing recovery concepts to people whose cultures and languages do not include western concepts of substance use disorders or recovery.

ACORN has recently started peer outreach by offering a daily lunch, with food from ACRS's food bank, to the neediest members of their community, who are usually homeless. The lunch program offers the opportunity to get connected with others who have successfully made the recovery journey.

RCSP Project
& Grantee:

Association of Persons Affected by Addiction
(APAA)

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APAA is a recovery community organization offering peer-to-peer assistance in finding services that support recovery, reduce relapse, and promote wellness. Particular emphasis is on serving people who are in pre-recovery, have co-occurring disorders, are involved with the criminal justice system, or are making a transition into or out of publicly funded treatment. Also targeted are youth and family members.

Peer Coaching

Peer coaches are the heart of the APAA program. Trained and supervised by a senior coach, they are on hand at all times in APAA's offices and in a number of settings in stakeholder organizations collaborating with APAA. These settings include a number of drop-in centers operated by the public treatment provider in Dallas and five Dallas courtrooms. In all of these settings, the peer coaches provide recovery "priming" and help people connect to resources that support recovery.

Life Skills Classes and Wellness Activities

APAA is reaching 250 people a month in a variety of activities, ranging from career planning classes to recovery mentoring workshops. Education and career planning sessions conducted by peer leaders include GED preparation, reading and study skills, job exploration, and job readiness coaching. The wellness program, centered at the APAA Wellness Center, includes workshops on such topics as relapse prevention, nutrition, stress and anger management and yoga and meditation classes. All wellness activities stress holistic health and incorporate the "stages of change" model of recovery.

Clean Teens

Youth in juvenile court are offered a chance to be part of APAA's Clean Teens and Family Recreation Group. Peer coaches and others in recovery spend time with teens and their families in a variety of recreational activities.

Co-occurring Recovery Education Groups

Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA) support groups meet weekly to enable peers to learn more about mental illness and recovery. Participants in a peer-led class called Recovery 101 discuss powerlessness vs. power, similarities between substance use disorders and mental illness, definition

and stages of recovery, common recovery issues, spirituality, the hero's journey, and other topics.

Katrina Evacuees

APAA continues to provide peer recovery support services for Katrina survivors new to the Dallas community and participates on the City of Dallas Katrina Task Force.

ATR-Access to Recovery

The Texas ATR initiative is providing funding for APAA peer services to populations covered by the initiative, including services to Katrina survivors and services provided through the Divert Court and the Probation Department. APAA and the El Paso Alliance (a former RCSP grantee) are working with the State to initiate a process for accrediting peer recovery support services in Texas.

APAA Safe Haven Housing

APAA provides transitional recovery housing for those needing extra support during the early stages of recovery.

RCSP Project: Detroit Recovery Project (DRP)

Grantee: Clark Associates, Inc.
Detroit, Michigan

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DRP was designed to create ongoing alumni relationships among graduates of the treatment provider network in Detroit, with a view both to enhancing the alumni's commitment to sustained recovery and creating a web of peer support for recovery in the city.

Detroit Recovery Project Welcome Center

The DRP Welcome Center serves as a safe haven to recovering people in the City of Detroit and surrounding areas. It offers peer-led, peer-driven, and peer-run services ranging from recovery support meetings to sports activities and meditation. The center occupies a house obtained through a collaborative effort by DRP, the Partnership for a Drug Free Detroit, and the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries. As a result of this collaboration, DRP also has acquired an additional site for expanded recovery community outreach.

Peer-led Recovery Support and Education Groups

The peer leaders, affectionately known as peer "elders," facilitate women's groups, men's groups, mentorship groups, secondary illness groups, co-occurring disorder support groups, and cognitive skills workshops. In addition, they offer daily computer and GED preparation workshops. Biweekly job readiness and employability workshops are provided as well, along with health education and fitness classes.

Referral and Support Services

Every individual coming to the center completes a membership form, noting his or her needs and desire for a DRP referral coach. A DRP referral coach works with the members, steering them to needed housing and employment services. Transportation supports are provided to individuals who have no way of getting to needed services.

Opportunities for Healthy Living

DRP incorporates athletics as part of its mission of making opportunities for healthy living available to the recovery community. It does so by partnering with other Detroit organizations. For example, through its

collaboration with a local gym, DRP is able to offer its members access to a state-of-the-art recreational facility with an Olympic-sized swimming pool, full basketball court, weight room, and aerobics and yoga classes. DRP also offers the opportunity to be on (or root for) DRP's basketball and bowling teams in a city league.

RCSP Project: G.M.I. Wings

Grantee: Group Ministries, Inc.
Buffalo, New York

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Group Ministries, Inc. is a faith-based nondenominational inner-city multiservice program serving hard-to-reach persons with a history of a substance use disorder and AIDS. G.M.I. Wings functions within Group Ministries, conducting outreach and providing peer recovery support services primarily to African Americans and other people of color.

Peer-led Support Groups

G.M.I. Wings offers a variety of peer-led support groups. One of these, with almost 200 participants, is the “Movin On” Group for women, which focuses on helping participants discover that recovery is more than “clean time” and can be a platform for self-development. Strategies for dealing with feelings that can trigger relapse are addressed in another group called “You Feelin’ Me?” These support groups are seen as tools to strengthen motivation and foster reengagement with the community.

Computers for Employability

A peer leader provides computer instruction for those seeking employment.

Partnering for Educational Opportunity

G.M.I. WINGS has partnered with Erie Community College to create a number of recovery-friendly initiatives. The College is now offering Recovery-To-Education, an initiative that provides tutoring and fast-track financial aid and case management, if needed, to recovering persons starting or returning to college. G.M.I. Wings also has partnered with the college on a College-To-Church initiative, under which fully accredited college courses are now being offered in seven neighborhood churches.

Missing Link

G.M.I. Wings also works with local churches to develop church-based recovery support groups. Four churches are active in this partnership effort.

RCSP Project: H.I.G.H. (How I Got Help) on Recovery

Grantee: AIDS Service Center of Lower Manhattan (ASC)
New York, New York

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AIDS Service Center is a multiservice community organization providing HIV/AIDS peer education, training and outreach; specialized women's services; health promotion initiatives; and related services to promote the well-being, empowerment, and stability of persons living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS throughout New York City and neighboring areas.

H.I.G.H. on Recovery was established as a project within ASC to address the needs of the target population of people in or seeking recovery from a substance use disorder who also are living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS.

Support Groups

As a means of improving and maintaining overall wellness, H.I.G.H. on Recovery's support groups help people improve their relapse prevention skills and gain insights into related problem areas. The groups are led by recovery peer educators who have been trained by ASC's peer education staff to address issues of recovery with people who have the co-occurring disorders. The groups deal with recovery topics of special interest to people with co-occurring disorders.

Recovery Theatre

Two recovery peer educators have developed and presented real-life scenarios on relapse prevention to more than 20 different groups within ASC, the host agency, and collaborating organizations. The H.I.G.H. on Recovery actors act out a scenario of life events that can trigger relapse and ask the group to process the strengths and weaknesses of the characters in the enactment. After suggesting healthier responses to the situation, participants then act out the responses they suggested, getting practice in new skills. Because of the popularity of these sessions and the lessons learned through role play, H.I.G.H. on Recovery is taking its theatre to more groups of people in recovery.

Outreach Activities

Specific peer leader responsibilities have been identified for some graduates of the peer education program. For example, one graduate peer recovery educator conducts recovery outreach to recovering addicts in New York's single-room-occupancy hotels, soup kitchens, and health fairs. Another conducts monthly workshops on recovery in a residential facility for HIV-positive recovering addicts, an outpatient treatment program, and a detox program.

RCSP Project:	Our Common Welfare (OCW)
Grantee:	Women in New Recovery (WINR) Mesa, Arizona
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WINR, started in 1993 by a woman in recovery to provide recovery homes for women, now accommodates 170 residents in Prescott and Mesa. Our Common Welfare (OCW), a broad-based recovery support program, provides peer recovery support services in Phoenix and Prescott to WINR residents and others in recovery. The most recent addition to OCW's service menu is an Addiction Resource Recovery Center (ARRC), opened in downtown Mesa to serve as a recovery services and drop-in and service center.

Peer Leadership Training

OCW trains about 50 peer leaders annually to facilitate and lead OCW's recovery support services. The experience of providing peer services helps anchor their personal recovery, enabling them to give back in a meaningful way. It also prepares them for future paid employment as peer leaders and coaches in treatment programs.

Peer-led Classes

OCW's peer-led services for women include personal development workshops and recovery case management, prisoner assistance during incarceration, and dental workshops. Recreation programs are provided for women, their children, and partners; and housing information and referral resources are available to both women and men in recovery. All of these services are planned and provided by peer leaders.

A 5-week Personal Development Series consists of workshops on life skills and relationship building designed to meet the emotional needs identified by peers in an assessment conducted by OCW prior to offering services. Several peer leaders have been trained and are now qualified to lead these workshops.

Recovery Case Management

Peers in Transition is the name of an ongoing program of recovery case management provided in weekly peer-led groups to help peers prepare for the transition from recovery housing to independent living. Aftercare and Community Integration, another case management program, provides participants with individualized resources to aid in the transition into permanent recovery and a place in the community. Peers seem to benefit

from defining the framework for recovery case management meetings facilitated by a peer leader.

Recovery Case Management for Incarcerated Women

Recovery case management for incarcerated women begins in the Perryville Prison Complex and extends for up to 1 year after release. After an introduction to OCW, inmates can opt to receive the services. Peer letter writers then correspond with the incarcerated women and provide guidance that supports them in the recovery process prior to release. Upon release, women are invited to join the OCW Freedom Club and receive peer support from others who have walked that path successfully as they make their transition back into society.

Social and Recreational Activities

The OCW community needs assessment showed that people in recovery have a strong desire for positive social and educational activities with other people in recovery; many see these opportunities as critical to sustaining long-term recovery. OCW peer leaders work with peers to identify, organize, and lead activities, such as attending monthly cultural events or having family day activities.

Dental Workshops

OCW peer leaders have been trained to facilitate Dental Education Workshops in which they share information about dental health, the damage caused by substance use disorders, preventive measures, and finding reasonably priced dental services.

RCSP Project: RECOVER Project

Grantee: Western Massachusetts Training Consortium
Holyoke, Massachusetts

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Website: www.wmtcinfo.org

The Western Massachusetts Training Consortium is a private, nonprofit corporation that undertakes community-based initiatives to meet the needs of people with disabilities and those living with the impact of abuse, including substance use disorders. The Consortium works to create and influence changes in the environment to improve the quality of life. The RECOVER project has the aim of making its county a recovery-informed community in which opportunities for recovery and wellness are enhanced and where people seeking recovery are supported.

Recovery Drop-in Center

A Recovery Drop-in Center is the heart of the RECOVER project and the hub of most project activities. Peer volunteers and staff work at the center, which provides a safe place for individuals needing peer support. Some of the groups and activities initiated and led by peers at the Center include: an art class, a crochet class, a mending workshop, and a computer literacy class. Mutual support groups that meet at the Center include a SMART recovery group for teens and young adults.

Peers Taking a Holistic Approach to Recovery

A number of activities conceptualized and developed by individual members of RECOVER take a holistic approach to the process of recovery. These include a hepatitis C support group, created and led by a peer with this illness, and Reiki sessions. A number of activities are led by people who won “mini-grants” from a local community development initiative. These include Healing through Movement, two walking groups, and a women’s group which is producing a musical CD on recovery.

The ATRIUM (Addictions & Trauma Recovery Integration Model) group for women who have experienced trauma is led by two trained peers. This 12-week course is offered whenever a group of women who could benefit emerges within the RECOVER community.

The RECOVER Project also provides yoga classes and hosts open mic nights when the recovery community gathers to socialize and share their talents. A volunteer barber in recovery gives haircuts to those low on funds.

Mentoring for Incarcerated Men

This newest RECOVER initiative, a long time in planning with a local correctional facility, consists of peer mentors building relationships with incarcerated mentees preparing for return to the community. Ninety days before their release, mentees begin meeting with RECOVER mentors at the jail every other week; at 60 days, the pairs begin meeting weekly. The aim of this peer-led project is to enable the men to leave the institution already connected to the recovery community and prepared to begin the tasks of reentry.

Peer Leadership

Peer ownership and leadership of the RECOVER effort are reflected in peer operating committees and groups, including a newsletter group, an ethics committee, a social activity committee, a fundraising committee, and a group that is developing a recovery trivia game.

RCSP Project:	Recovery Association Project (RAP)
Grantee:	Central City Concern (CCC) Portland, Oregon
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Websites:	www.centralcityconcern.org www.rap-nw.org

Central City Concern works to help individuals move from homelessness and poverty to lives of self-sufficiency and independence. CCC formed RAP, a peer-led recovery community organization, under an earlier RCSP grant, and RAP is now providing recovery support services in the Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington metropolitan area, as well as in Oregon's Mid Willamette Valley.

Resource Center and Resource Coaching

Close to downtown and transit-accessible, the RAP Center operates 11 hours a day, Monday-Thursday, and 8 hours on Fridays, functioning as a drop-in center where people in recovery are available to help their peers access resources and build relationships in a clean and sober environment. The Center has staff offices, a resource and referral center with computers, meeting rooms, several large rooms used for classes and activities, a kitchen, and café.

Peer resource coaches staff the reception area, handle phone inquiries, and work with peers to find housing, employment assistance, and other resources. They also offer assistance with computers, Internet, phones, and fax. One popular service provided by the coaches is assistance with resume preparation.

Classes and Workshops

People in recovery design and teach all classes at the RAP Center, creating much variety. Classes and workshops, repeated quarterly, are announced online and in a RAP newsletter. Examples include:

- **Regular classes:** Computer basics, RAP orientations, and Yoga classes
- **Trainings:** Conflict Resolution for 12 Steppers, Finding a Job with a Criminal Background, Prostitution Recovery, RAP Basics, and Turning Story Into Issue

- **Workshops** : Creative Writing, Returning to School, Men & Addiction, Communication, Advanced Leadership, Recovery Coach Training, Meditation, and Vision Quest.

Social Activities and Mutual Aid Groups

The RAP Center is a recovery community hub with peers keeping the second floor open nightly and weekends for activities, including movie nights, bingo, music jams, large meetings, and dances. Peers host a variety groups, including well-attended RAP membership meetings and mutual support groups such as Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS), SMART Recovery, and numerous 12-step groups.

RAP's city league softball team has brought home numerous championship trophies. Recreational "pick-up" softball games happen every Saturday in the summer, organized by a peer. RAP also sponsors the annual Recovery Month activity, "Hands Across the Bridge," the Northwest's highest profile, multicultural, family-friendly event educating the public that recovery saves lives and transforms our communities.

Participation in Access to Recovery Initiative

One of RAP's most recent contributions to the expansion of recovery support services has been providing technical assistance on peer services to Washington State programs involved in the ATR initiative.

2001 Grantees

RCSP Project: Alaska Women's Recovery Project (AWRP)

Grantee: Southcentral Foundation
Anchorage, Alaska

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The Alaska Women's Recovery Project (AWRP) is hosted by Southcentral Foundation, an Alaska Native-owned healthcare organization serving Alaska Native and American Indian people living in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, and 60 rural villages. AWRP promotes peer support as a means of strengthening the ability of women to achieve and sustain recovery and develop new leadership skills.

Support Gatherings

Women who seek services from AWRP have wide-ranging needs for information and skill-development opportunities to help improve their overall wellness and strengthen their recovery skills. They attend twice-weekly "gatherings," at which peer leaders facilitate information-sharing discussions aimed at building skills in making healthy life choices, supporting personal development, and strengthening long-term recovery. At each gathering, participants suggest topics for future meetings; typical topics have been self-care, setting limits, many aspects of wellness (such as good nutrition), and handling stress.

Holistic Health

Healthy living is modeled by the peer leaders who facilitate the gatherings; for example, nutritious snacks are served and the group discusses the facts of healthy and unhealthy eating, as well as the selection and preparation of food for children. Well-attended 30-minute "wellness walks" before the gatherings help peers learn to relax and enjoy other people, two skills important to healthy recovery.

Family Activities

Because many of the Anchorage women seeking services are mothers, AWRP provides family-strengthening activities. The project provides supervised children's activities during the gatherings—in a separate location—to offer children a positive nurturing experience. During the year, numerous family events are held, including an annual family picnic, holiday events, and a sports day with swimming, ice skating, and other sports. These are structured to enable the women to learn ways of interacting socially with other families, as well as with their own family.

members, thus strengthening their sense of adequacy individually and as parents.

Skill Building for Peer Leaders

A dedicated core team of peer leaders meets twice a month to plan activities and take part in skill-building sessions. In a recurring leadership development activity, peer leaders share with each other brief summaries they have written on their facilitation experience and new knowledge gained from reviewing AWRP's growing library of resources and group leadership materials. AWRP also holds day-long skill-building sessions several times a year.

Awards and Recognition

The AWRP peer leadership team was presented with the Outstanding Group Volunteer Award at the May 2004 Alaska Annual School on Addictions.

Three public service announcements from the AWRP media campaign "I'm the Face of Recovery" received the International Communicator Award of Distinction in 2005.

The annual Celebration of Recovery Poetry Jam has become a highlight of Recovery Month and inspires the sharing of creative, poignant, and joyful expression of the strength and benefits women find in their recovery.

RCSP Project: A-Ye-Ga: Awakening the Recovery Spirit

Grantee: Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI)
Cherokee, North Carolina

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A-Ye-Ga: Awakening the Recovery Spirit is a peer recovery services program designed to provide support and a sense of community to tribal members who seek a life of recovery. It also works to create new norms about recovery on the Qualla Boundary of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians of Western North Carolina.

Community Norms

A group of about 30 individuals, known as the Recovery Community Organization, are actively involved in A-Ye-Ga activities and help plan special community events to celebrate recovery. These events have given the recovery community organization a presence in the tribal community and have increased public awareness that recovery can lead to fuller, happier, and healthier lives with meaningful relationships.

Culturally Appropriate Recovery Support

A-Ye-Ga offers the following recovery support services: Medicine Wheel and 12 Step Circles of Recovery and several support groups, including Native Americans in Recovery, a therapeutic women's support group, a parenting support group, and Crossings, a Native American sober drum group. These groups are built on traditional values taken from learning at the knees of the elders and are specifically designed for individuals and families accustomed to Native American ways of life.

Transitional Half-Way House

A-Ye-Ga established a halfway house for Native American men based on the Oxford House model. Since its inception 2 years ago, it continues to operate at full capacity.

Collaboration

By collaborating with community agencies and tribal programs, including the tribal substance abuse and mental health services, A-Ye-Ga has increased the tribe's ability to provide services and programs to tribal members seeking recovery. Technical assistance from White Bison has facilitated new collaborative connections and strengthened relationships.

RCSP Project:	Community Change Oriented Recovery Effort (C-CORE)
Grantee:	Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona Guadalupe, Arizona
Contact:	Clare Cory (480) 768-2025 Clare.cory@pascuayaqui-nsn.gov
Website:	www.pascuayaqui-nsn.gov

C-CORE is a culturally specific RCSP project under the umbrella of the behavioral health authority of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. It operates within a cultural context where substance use is viewed as a prosocialization activity that binds people in community by connecting people and introducing ways of relating to each other. C-CORE believes that a community of recovering peers can provide essential elements of the recovery change process a sense of belonging and a way to ease the sense of loss that accompanies a decision to stop using substances.

Community Awareness and Norms

Peer leader volunteers in C-CORE have increased community awareness about sobriety and recovery through their personal stories and in community events promoting the recovery message. Support from key elders in the community has been pivotal in this effort to realign tribal norms around recovery.

Recovery Coaches

C-CORE peer leaders have assumed the role of recovery coaches. Consistent with C-CORE's emphasis on the social nature of substance use and recovery, C-CORE explains the recovery coach service it offers to community members seeking recovery as "inviting them to a dance. The job of the [recovery coach] is to provide the music, and, without the music, there is no dance." Some times, the invitation to dance results in a referral to treatment. Other times, the invitation to dance follows treatment. But, in all cases, it is an invitation to a social process of affiliation with the peer community.

Recovery Coach Training

Recovery coaches receive periodic trainings on topics including boundaries, family systems, stages of change, community readiness for recovery, and peer services delivery.

The Power of Affiliation

Over time, C-CORE peer leaders have become more trusting and compassionate and less fearful and judgmental of new members. This, in turn, has created a community able to foster in new members a sense of belonging. C-CORE believes that this sense of belonging needs to exist before change can occur.

Culturally Relevant Supports

C-CORE provides a number of other culturally relevant peer supports, such as involving elders and children in appropriate activities, a sweat lodge, and traditional Yaqui dances. C-CORE has instituted community events that coincide with important cultural traditions, including Dia de Los Muertos and Cuaresma. These events are held in the cultural center of the community and help keep the project grounded in the traditions of the tribe.

Youth Component

C-CORE has a team building and leadership development program for youth who have been expelled from school and are involved in the juvenile justice system because of their drug and alcohol use. The program promotes sobriety and helps youth make positive choices.

RCSP Project: Friends of Addiction Recovery–New Jersey
(FOAR-NJ)

Grantee: National Council on Alcoholism and Drug
Dependence (NCADD)-New Jersey

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FOAR-NJ is a recovery community organization dedicated to honoring, supporting, and celebrating recovery. Operating under the umbrella of NCADD-New Jersey, FOAR-NJ has developed the capacity of the recovery community to lead learning circles that provide social support for recovery.

Learning Circles

Based on the belief that participation with peers in collective adult learning activities enhances recovery, FOAR-NJ conducts learning circles in a number of venues across New Jersey. The peer-led learning circles are particularly valued in settings where social supports for early recovery need strengthening, as in pre-release correctional programs and recovery homes.

Learning circle topics are selected by the participants, typically focusing on issues of importance to people in early recovery, including family and relationship issues and challenges related to stress. The circles usually 1-1/2 hours long also have a spiritual component, with opening and closing rituals developed by FOAR-NJ peer leaders that draw on a number of spiritual traditions, including the work of Henri Nouwen on servant leadership.

Recovery Drumming Circles

FOAR-NJ, borrowing an idea from Circles of Recovery at White Bison, offers recovery drumming circles. They last several hours, providing fun, meditation, and bonding among participants; many participants have made breakthroughs in self-understanding in this active environment of support.

Recovery Walk

FOAR-NJ brings the recovery message of hope to the statewide community each year in its Recovery Walk that attracts over 2,000 people to Liberty State Park, across from the Statue of Liberty, to hear stories of recovery told by members of the recovery organization and celebrate recovery.

RCSP Project: Frontier Recovery Network (FRN)

Grantee: Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies, University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, Nevada

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Through Federal contracts and grants, the Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies (CASAT) provides training, technical assistance, evaluation, research, and other services to support prevention, treatment, and recovery. FRN was formed to help support, assist, and encourage any person who is recovering or seeking to recover from a substance use disorder. All services, groups, and events have been developed in response to what peers perceive as gaps in recovery support services in northern Nevada.

Recovery Support Groups

FRN services include peer-to-peer recovery support groups held every Monday through Thursday evening. Monday evenings are designated for specialty informational groups focusing on topics such as anger management and parenting in recovery. On Tuesday night is the Men's Group; Wednesday, the "Felon Friendly" mixed group; and Thursday, the Women's Group. If peers need assistance with transportation to and from the meetings, FRN provides bus passes.

Resource Network

The Resource Network is a bulletin board developed, implemented, and maintained by peers to advertise employment and housing opportunities and other services for people in recovery. Run completely by peers, this activity has been successful in connecting peers with needed services and opportunities.

Recovery Month

FRN is a leader in the Reno/Sparks community's annual Recovery Month events in September. Last year FRN sponsored two weekend activities: "Pizza and a Movie" to kick-off the festivities, and a "Steppin' Out for Recovery" walkathon the following weekend. Along with local treatment providers, 12-Step groups, and area businesses, FRN staff and peers also conducted an annual Recovery Picnic.

Family-centered Socialization Opportunities

FRN facilitates at least one family social activity every month. Past events have included picnics, bowling, a Super Bowl party, and a visit to baseball batting cages. Opportunities for family-centered alcohol- and drug-free activities are particularly valued by families attempting to sustain recovery within a city that markets adult entertainment.

RCSP Project: Full Circle Project

Grantee: Easy Does It
Leesport, Pennsylvania

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Easy Does It is a nonprofit peer-run organization that provides recovery housing, mutual support programs, and related activities. The Full Circle Project is dedicated to improving the quality of life of individuals and families recovering from the effects of addiction, thereby contributing to the betterment of its community and society as a whole.

Recovery Support Groups

Three recovery support groups are a main thrust of Full Circle's peer services. In the Re-Entry Project/Winners' Circle, participants assist each other in learning and assimilating behaviors that promote social and vocational success. The Co-Occurring Double Trouble meeting provides a forum for mutual support and discussion of issues faced by peers with co-occurring disorders. The third peer-to-peer discussion group is God as I Understand God, which helps people become comfortable in discussing and examining spirituality as part of the recovery process.

Recovery Education

Recovery 101 targets newcomers to recovery and covers such topics as the history of recovery, 12-Step meeting protocol, sponsorship, early recovery risks, and relationships in recovery. Recovery Management is the name given to a program of educational modules addressing the tasks of early recovery, including effective communication, anger and stress management, relapse prevention, and life skills.

Full Circle presents English as a Second Language classes to help Spanish-speaking people in recovery overcome language and learning barriers. Support is also provided to help people upgrade their level of literacy and prepare for taking the GED examination.

Men Mentoring Men

This new program, started in 2006, pairs men in early recovery with mentors to help them navigate obstacles that must be met to successfully achieve a full life in recovery.

Multigenerational Education Programs

Two groups for parents and caregivers in recovery and their children are Building Blocks for a Healthy Future and Too Smart to Start. The first, for parents of children aged 3 to 6, covers the basics of prevention. Too Smart to Start is designed to educate 9- to 13-year-olds and support their recovering parents and caregivers as they participate in their children's activities.

Social Programs

Full Circle offers a monthly Drummers Circle, aimed at bringing parents and children together. A monthly Ladies Night Out, combining a potluck dinner with social and educational activities, has also been started. Family Night Out is another monthly event that provides socialization opportunities. It takes place at the same time Easy Does It hosts AA, Al Anon, and Alateen meetings. These social activities serve as opportunities to recruit volunteers and also allow for mentoring of those new in recovery.

RCSP Project	Nashville Area Recovery Alliance (NARA)
Grantee	Alcohol and Drug Council of Middle Tennessee Nashville
Contact	Terri Dorsey (615) 269-0029 ext. 121 tdorsey@adcmt.org

The Alcohol and Drug Council of Middle Tennessee is an affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. NARA is a grassroots, membership-based recovery organization that aims to help individuals strengthen their recovery, prevent relapse, and attain long-term recovery. After four years, its peer services are well established and the organization is looking toward adding new services.

Recovery Learning Circles

NARA adapted the learning circle format used in various adult learning contexts for use in a recovery community context. In their present form, the circles are led by peer presenters who describe the methods they used for conducting the “repair work” so necessary in early recovery, such as regaining a driver’s license, dealing with family alcohol and drug problems, seeking forgiveness, repairing credit, and learning common-sense budgeting. Participants in the learning circles respond by offering their own solutions, much to the benefit of the newcomers (whose feedback about the value of the circles is very positive).

Enhancing Future Circles

NARA peers held several brainstorming sessions about the unique problems of persons in early recovery when they search for jobs, such as gaps in employment, a criminal record, lack of confidence, and limited social contacts. Topics suggested were researched and organized, and the result was a peer-developed curriculum which will be presented over eight learning circles.

Recovery Support Groups to Be Funded by ATR

NARA set up a collaborative arrangement with a program for homeless addicted veterans in Nashville to offer two recovery support groups each week in the first month after treatment to patients at the Veterans Administration Hospital. Participants will present ATR vouchers. NARA’s host agency has administrative and fiscal systems necessary to receive reimbursement for the vouchers.

RCSP Project:	Proyecto Bienestar
Grantee:	Pinal Hispanic Council Eloy, Arizona
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Website:	www.pinalhispaniccouncil.org

Started as a grassroots youth organization in 1980, Pinal Hispanic Council now comprises two outpatient behavioral health clinics and specialized services including substance use assessment, treatment, and family counseling, as well as domestic violence and anger management programs. Proyecto Bienestar (Project Wellbeing) provides peer services to the Hispanic recovery community.

Leadership Development

Proyecto Bienestar conducts three-tiered peer leadership development. Levels I and II are service levels; Level III peer leaders conduct community presentations to recruit peers in early recovery and attend community meetings on alcohol and drug problems. Level III peer leaders are increasingly sought out by human service agencies as valued sources of information on recovery strategies and opportunities that they can adapt in their programs.

Linking and Leveraging Services

Proyecto Bienestar has become a peer-driven service-leveraging organization on behalf of recovering people, with volunteer peer leaders engaged in linking stakeholder service organizations, churches, and the recovery community to increase needed services. Many of these efforts have involved outreach and support to people in pre-recovery who are considering, but not yet committed to, change. For them, peer leaders model a message of hope.

Outreach to Homeless Citizens

The RCSP project became painfully aware of the rising problem of homelessness in its rural area when three Level I peers relapsed and died. In a concerted response, peer leaders leveraged additional resources for the homeless population, primarily by working with the Coalition Against Homelessness and local parole and probation offices to provide beds in halfway homes. They also inaugurated a Fresh Start program offering homeless people a hot shower, access to laundry facilities, and dental

hygiene supplies contributed by the churches and the Department of Corrections.

Organizing Responses to Court-Ordered Fines

While helping people find jobs, Proyecto Bienestar peer leaders found that many people in recovery had misdemeanor convictions related to their substance use on their record but were unable to pay court-ordered fines because they did not have jobs and income. Peer leaders worked with them in a successful advocacy effort with the courts, seeking conversion of fines into community service. Now, as peers “work off” their fines, they also are reengaging with their communities, restoring their reputations, and setting examples for others.

Instrumental Supports for Women

Proyecto Bienestar peer leaders provide instrumental supports for women in early recovery who need help in organizing a response to their court orders. Peers conduct parenting classes, help them deal with housing issues, and conduct educational workshops to help women work toward being reunited with their children

RCSP Project
& Grantee

Recovery Consultants of Atlanta, Inc.

Contacts

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Recovery Consultants of Atlanta, Inc. (RCA) is a nonprofit organization founded by spiritually centered members of metro-Atlanta's 12-step and faith-based recovery communities. The RCA project is home to a faith-based, peer-led initiative designed primarily, but not exclusively, to build capacity among members of Atlanta's ethnic minority recovery community. It does this by partnering with faith institutions and assisting them in developing programs that provide services for persons in recovery, helping to reduce relapse and sustain long-term recovery.

Jobs and Work Experience

An example of the peer-led projects RCA conducts in partnership with churches is an employment program for men in early recovery attempting to reestablish lives in the community. The men, who live in a peer-led transitional housing program, are employed either part- or full-time in a job training program referred to as Recovery @ Work (RAW). This program, led by a peer with sustained recovery, prepares the men for careers in both residential and commercial pressure washing, residential painting, and minor home repairs.

Faith-based Recovery Support Group

Celebrate Recovery is the name given to a faith-centered mutual support group facilitated by RCA peers. The weekly meetings are well attended; participants are encouraged to share their experiences, strengths, and hopes without using profanity and are encouraged to highlight God's role in their lives and recovery. Child care and transportation are offered, making the meeting attractive to many who are unable to attend other meetings because of the challenges related to a lack of childcare and transportation.

Boosting Future Counselors

RCA also works with peers with a minimum of one year of recovery who want to develop the skills that will lead to certification as an addictions counselor.

RCSP Project	Restoring Citizenship
Grantee	Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC) Chicago, Illinois
Contact	Cherie Hunter (312) 573-8302 chunter@tasc-il.org

A not-for-profit organization, TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) provides behavioral health recovery management services for individuals with substance use and mental health disorders. Restoring Citizenship provides peer recovery support services to former inmates of correctional organizations in Illinois who are returning to the community with criminal records, as well as to current inmates in pre-release programs readying them for re-entry.

Winners' Circle

Winners' Circles are highly specialized peer-led mutual support groups that support recovery and prevent relapse in a manner tailored to the needs of ex-offenders and modeled to some extent after 12-step programs. Sharing is focused on recovery but within the context of the problems faced upon re-entry from correctional institutions. Peer leaders strive to create a family-friendly atmosphere so that the Winners' Circle meetings also meet the socialization needs of ex-offenders in recovery. Ten Winners' Circles have been established throughout Illinois.

Inner Circle

Inner Circle is a pre-release corrections-system-based recovery support group modeled on its post-release counterpart, Winners' Circle. Restoring Citizenship has now established ten youth Inner Circles and 12 adult Inner circles; all circles meet weekly in the institutions. Restoring Citizenship's peer leaders have been instrumental in performing outreach to the institutions.

RCSP Project: Syracuse Recovery Community Service Program

Grantee: Center for Community Alternatives
Syracuse, New York

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Website: www.communityalternatives.org

The Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) is a leader in the field of community-based alternatives to incarceration. The Syracuse Recovery Community Service Program (SRCSP) offers a variety of peer services, all of them with a double goal: to help people avoid relapse and lead crime-free lives.

Drop In Center

This Drop In Center is the focal point for SRCSP's activities, serving multiple purposes. It is a "safe haven" for peers to be in fellowship with others in recovery. Scheduled programs are offered daily, with peer-led treatment readiness and meditation groups at 10 a.m. and life skills, learning circles, and educational activities at 2 p.m. Workshops cover a variety of areas, including civic restoration, financial literacy, ethics, confidentiality and boundaries, healthy relationships, safe sex, HIV prevention, domestic violence issues, and a range of topics relating to employment.

The Center also provides individualized referral for substance use assessment and treatment placement and helps people find drug-free housing, employment, legal assistance, and educational or vocational training. In collaboration with the New York State Department of Health, SRCSP also offers both pre- and post-HIV counseling and rapid testing.

Civic Restoration Services

SRCSP peer leaders work with inmates in "clean and sober pods" at the Onondaga County Justice Center to educate them on how to manage and reduce, once they are released, some of the civil disabilities that can result from having had a criminal conviction. The focus of the monthly training is on "criminal convictions and employment what you need to know." Peer leaders provide individualized civic restoration support at the Drop-in Center.

Mentoring for Re-entry

Peer mentors provide emotional support for peers who are reentering the community, as well as informational and instrumental supports. The opportunity to help young people end their criminal careers after initial contacts with the juvenile justice system is very appealing to SRCSP's

peer leaders. Consequently, some of the peer coaches have recently begun mentoring 16- to 24-year-old inmates at the correctional facility to help ensure that they become able to live drug- and crime-free lives as they mature. SRCSP has prepared a training curriculum for these peer mentors.